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THE FREETHINKER'S
TEXT-BOOK.

EDITED BY

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CHARLES WATTS.

PART II.
CHRISTIANITY.
BY ANNIE BESANT.

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himself down is the second trial, and the offer of the kingdoms of the world the third : in Luke the order is reversed. In additions to these contradictions, we must note the absurdity of the story. The Devil "set him on a pinnacle of the temple." Did Jesus and the Devil go flying through the air together, till the Devil put Jesus down? What did the people in the courts below think of the Devil and a man standing on a point of the temple in the full sight of Jerusalem? Did so unusual an occurrence cause no astonishment in the city? Where is the high mountain from which Jesus and the Devil saw all round the globe? Is it true that the Devil gives power to whom he will? If so, why is it said that the powers are "ordained of God"?

Another "discrepancy, concerning the denial of Christ by Peter, furnishes a still stronger proof that these records have not come down to us with the exactness of a contemporary character, much less with the authority of inspiration. The four accounts of Peter's denial vary considerably. The variations will be more intelligible, exhibited in a tabular form" (Giles' "Christian Records," p. 228). We present the table, slightly altered in arrangement, and corrected in some details :—

	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
1st.	Seated without in the palace, to a damsel.	Beneath in the palace, by the fire, to a maid.	In the midst of the hall where Jesus was being tried, seated by the fire, to a maid.	On entering, to the damsel that kept the door.
2nd.	Out in the porch, having left the room, in answer to a second maid.	Out in the porch, having left the room, in answer to a second maid.	Still in the hall, in answer to a man.	In the hall, standing by the fire, in answer to the bystanders.
3rd.	Out in the porch, to the bystanders.	Out in the porch, to the bystanders.	Still in the hall, to a man.	Still in the hall, to a man.

In addition to these discrepancies, we find that Jesus prophesies that Peter shall deny him thrice "before the cock crow," while in Mark the cock crows immediately after the first denial : in Luke, Jesus and Peter remain throughout

the scene of the denial in the same hall, so that the Lord may turn and look upon Peter; while Matthew and Mark place him "beneath" or "without," and make the third denial take place in the porch outside—a place where Jesus, by the context, certainly could not see him.

How long did the ministry of Jesus last? Luke places his baptism in the fifteenth year of Tiberius (iii. 1), and he might have been crucified under Pontius Pilate at any time within the seven years following. The Synoptics mention but one Passover, and at that Jesus was crucified, thus limiting his ministry to one year, unless he broke the Mosaic law, and disregarded the feast; clearly his triumphal entry into Jerusalem is his first visit there in his manhood, since we find all the city moved and the people asking: "Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee" (Matt. xxi. 10, 11). His person would have been well known, had he visited Jerusalem before and worked miracles there. If, however, we turn to the Fourth Gospel, his ministry must extend over at least two years. According to Irenæus, he "did not want much of being fifty years old" when the Jews disputed with him ("Against Heresies," bk. ii., ch. 22, sec. 6), and he taught for nearly twenty years. Dr. Giles remarks that "the first three Gospels plainly exhibit the events of only one year; to prove them erroneous or defective in so important a feature as this, would be to detract greatly from their value" ("Christian Records," p. 112). "According to the first three Gospels, Christ's public life lasted only one year, at the end of which he went up to Jerusalem and was crucified" (Ibid, p. 111). "Would this questioning [on the triumphal entry] have taken place if Jesus had often made visits to Jerusalem, and been well known there? The multitude who answered the question, and who knew Jesus, consisted of those 'who had come to the feast,'—St. John indicates this [xii. 12]—but the people of Jerusalem knew him not, and, therefore, asked 'Who is this?'" (Ibid, p. 113). The fact is, that we know nothing certainly as to the birth, life, death, of this supposed Christ. His story is one tissue of contradictions. It is impossible to believe that the Synoptics and the fourth Gospel are even telling the history of the same person. The discourses of Jesus in the Synoptics are simple, although parabolical; in the Fourth they are mystical, and are being continually misunderstood by the people. The historical divergences are

marked. The fourth Gospel "tells us (ch. 1) that at the beginning of his ministry Jesus was at Bethabara, a town near the junction of the Jordan with the Dead Sea; here he gains three disciples, Andrew and another, and then Simon Peter: the next day he goes into Galilee and finds Philip and Nathanael, and on the following day—somewhat rapid travelling—he is present, with these disciples, at Cana, where he performs his first miracle, going afterwards with them to Capernaum and Jerusalem. At Jerusalem, whither he goes for 'the Jews' passover,' he drives out the traders from the temple and remarks, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up:' which remark causes the first of the strange misunderstandings between Jesus and the Jews peculiar to this Gospel, simple misconceptions which Jesus never troubles himself to set right. Jesus and his disciples then go to the Jordan, baptising, whence Jesus departs into Galilee with them, because he hears that the Pharisees know he is becoming more popular than the Baptist (ch. iv., 1, 3). All this happens before John is cast into prison, an occurrence which is a convenient note of time. We turn to the beginning of the ministry of Jesus as related by the three. Jesus is in the south of Palestine, but, hearing that John is cast into prison, he departs into Galilee, and resides at Capernaum. There is no mention of any ministry in Galilee and Judæa before this; on the contrary, it is only 'from that time' that 'Jesus *began* to preach.' He is alone, without disciples, but, walking by the sea, he comes upon Peter, Andrew, James, and John, and calls them. Now if the fourth Gospel is true, these men had joined him in Judæa, followed him to Galilee, south again to Jerusalem, and back to Galilee, had seen his miracles and acknowledged him as Christ, so it seems strange that they had deserted him and needed a second call, and yet more strange is it that Peter (Luke v. 1—11) was so astonished and amazed at the miracle of the fishes. The driving out of the traders from the temple is placed by the Synoptics at the very end of his ministry, and the remark following it is used against him at his trial: so was probably made just before it. The next point of contact is the history of the 5,000 fed by five loaves (ch. vi.); the preceding chapter relates to a visit to Jerusalem unnoticed by the three: indeed, the histories seem written of two men, one the 'prophet of Galilee' teaching in its cities, the other concentrating his energies on Jerusalem. The account of the miraculous feeding is alike

in all: not so the succeeding account of the multitude. In the fourth Gospel, Jesus and the crowd fall to disputing, as usual, and he loses many disciples: among the three, Luke says nothing of the immediately following events, while Matthew and Mark tell us that the multitudes—as would be natural—crowded round him to touch even the hem of his garment. This is the same as always: in the three the crowd loves him; in the fourth it carps at and argues with him. We must again miss the sojourn of Jesus in Galilee according to the three, and his visit to Jerusalem according to the one, and pass to his entry into Jerusalem in triumph. Here we notice a most remarkable divergence: the Synoptics tell us that he was going up to Jerusalem from Galilee, and, arriving on his way at Bethphage, he sent for an ass and rode thereon into Jerusalem: the fourth Gospel relates that he was dwelling at Jerusalem, and leaving it, for fear of the Jews, he retired, not into Galilee, but ‘beyond Jordan, into a place where John at first baptised,’ *i.e.*, Bethabara, ‘and *there he abode.*’ From thence he went to Bethany and raised to life a putrefying corpse: this stupendous miracle is never appealed to by the earlier historians in proof of their master’s greatness, though ‘much people of the Jews’ are said to have seen Lazarus after his resurrection; this miracle is also given as the reason for the active hostility of the priests, ‘from that day forward.’ Jesus then retires to Ephraim near the wilderness, from which town he goes to Bethany, and thence in triumph to Jerusalem, being met by the people ‘for that they heard that he had done this miracle.’ The two accounts have absolutely nothing in common except the entry into Jerusalem, and the preceding events of the Synoptics exclude those of the fourth Gospel, as does the latter theirs. If Jesus abode in Bethabara and Ephraim, he could not have come from Galilee; if he started from Galilee, he was not abiding in the south. John xiii.—xvii. stand alone, with the exception of the mention of the traitor. On the arrest of Jesus, he is led (ch. xviii. 13) to Annas, who sends him to Caiaphas, while the others send him direct to Caiaphas, but this is immaterial. He is then taken to Pilate: the Jews do not enter the judgment-hall, lest, being defiled, they ~~could~~ not eat the passover, a feast which, according to the Synoptics, was over, Jesus and his disciples having eaten it the night before. Jesus is exposed to the people at the sixth hour (ch. xix. 14), while Mark

tells us he was crucified three hours before—at the third hour—a note of time which agrees with the others, since they all relate that there was darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour, *i.e.*, there was thick darkness at the time when, ‘according to St. John,’ Jesus was exposed. Here our evangelist is in hopeless conflict with the three. The accounts about the resurrection are irreconcilable in all the Gospels, and mutually destructive. It remains to notice, among these discrepancies, one or two points which did not come in conveniently in the course of the narrative. During the whole of the fourth Gospel, we find Jesus constantly arguing for his right to the title of Messiah. Andrew speaks of him as such (i. 41); the Samaritans acknowledge him (iv. 42); Peter owns him (vi. 69); the people call him so (vii. 26, 31, 41); Jesus claims it (viii. 24); it is the subject of a law (ix. 22); Jesus speaks of it as already claimed by him (x. 24, 25); Martha recognises it (xi. 27). We thus find that, from the very first, this title is openly claimed by Jesus, and his right to it openly canvassed by the Jews.* But—in the three—the disciples acknowledge him as Christ, and he charges them to ‘tell *no man* that he was Jesus the Christ” (Matt. xvi. 20; Mark viii. 29, 30; Luke ix. 20, 21); and this in the same year that he blames the Jews for not owning this Messiahship, since he had told them who he was ‘from the beginning’ (ch. viii. 24, 25): so that, if ‘John’ was right, we fail to see the object of all the mystery about it, related by the Synoptics. We mark, too, how Peter is, in their account, praised for confessing him, for flesh and blood had not revealed it to him, while in the fourth Gospel, ‘flesh and blood,’ in the person of Andrew, reveal to Peter that the Christ is found; and there seems little praise due to Peter for a confession which had been made two or three years earlier by Andrew, Nathanael, John Baptist, and the Samaritans. Contradiction can scarcely be more direct. In John vii. Jesus owns that the Jews know his birthplace (28), and they state (41, 42) that he comes from Galilee, while Christ should be born at Bethlehem. Matthew and Luke distinctly say Jesus was born at Bethlehem; but here Jesus confesses the right knowledge of those who attribute his birthplace to Galilee, instead of setting their difficulty at rest by explaining that though brought up at Nazareth he was born in Bethlehem. But our writer was apparently ignorant of their accounts” (“According to St. John,” by

Annie Besant. Scott Series, pp. 11—14, ed. 1873). These are but a few of the contradictions in the Gospels, which compel us to reject them as historical narratives.

(3) *The fact that the story of the hero, the doctrines, the miracles, were current long before the supposed dates of the Gospels, etc.* There are two mythical theories as to the growth of the story of Jesus, which demand our attention; the first, that of which Strauss is the best known exponent, which acknowledges the historical existence of Jesus, but regards him as the figure round which has grown a mythus, moulded by the Messianic expectations of the Jews: the second, which is indifferent to his historical existence, and regards him as a new hero of the ancient sun-worship, the successor of Mithra, Krishna, Osiris, Bacchus, etc. To this school, it matters not whether there was a Jesus of Nazareth or not, just as it matters not whether a Krishna or an Osiris had an historical existence or not; it is *Christ*, the Sun-god, not *Jesus*, the Jewish peasant, whom they find worshipped in Christendom, and who is, therefore, the object of their interest.

According to the first theory, whatever was expected of the Messiah has been attributed to Jesus. "When not merely the particular nature and manner of an occurrence is critically suspicious, its external circumstances represented as miraculous and the like; but where likewise the essential substance and groundwork is either inconceivable in itself, or is in striking harmony with some Messianic idea of the Jews of that age, then not the particular alleged course and mode of the transaction only, but the entire occurrence must be regarded as unhistorical" (Strauss' "Life of Jesus," vol. i., p. 94). The mythic theory accepts an historical groundwork for many of the stories about Jesus, but it does not seek to explain the miraculous by attenuating it into the natural—as by explaining the story of the transfiguration to have been developed from the fact of Jesus meeting secretly two men, and from the brilliancy of the sunlight dazzling the eyes of the disciples—but it attributes the incredible portions of the history to the Messianic theories current among the Jews. The Messiah would do this and that; Jesus was the Messiah; therefore, Jesus did this and that—such, argue the supporters of the mythical theory, was the method in which the mythus was developed. The theory finds some support in the peculiar attitude of Justin Martyr, for instance, who believes a number of things about Jesus, not

because the things are thus recorded of him in history, but because the prophets stated that such things should happen to the Messiah. Thus, Jesus is descended from David, because the Messiah was to come of David's lineage. His birth is announced by an angelic visitant, because the birth of the Messiah must not be less honoured than that of Isaac or of Samson; he is born of a virgin, because God says of the Messiah, "this day have I begotten thee," implying the direct paternity of God, and because the prophecy in Is. vii. 14 was applied to the Messiah by the later Jews (see Septuagint translation, *παρθένος, a pure virgin*, while the Hebrew word *עלמה* signifies a young woman; the Hebrew word for virgin *בתולה* not being used in the text of Isaiah), the ideas of "son of God" and "son of a virgin" completing each other; born at Bethlehem, because there the Messiah was to be born (Micah v. 1); announced to shepherds, because Moses was visited among the flocks, and David taken from the sheepfolds at Bethlehem; heralded by a star, because a star should arise out of Jacob (Num. xxiv. 17), and "the Gentiles shall come to thy light" (Is. lx. 3); worshipped by magi, because the star was seen by Balaam, the magus, and astrologers would be those who would most notice a star; presented with gifts by these Eastern sages, because kings of Arabia and Saba shall offer gifts (Ps. lxxii. 10); saved from the destruction of the infants by a jealous king, because Moses, one of the great types of the Messiah, was so saved; flying into Egypt and thence returning, because Israel, again a type of the Messiah, so fled and returned, and "out of Egypt have I called my son" (Hos. xi. 1); at twelve years of age found in the temple, because the duties of the law devolved on the Jewish boy at that age, and where should the Messiah then be found save in his Father's temple? recognised at his baptism by a divine voice, to fulfil Is. xlii. 1; hovered over by a dove, because the brooding Spirit (Gen. i. 2) was regarded as dove-like, and the Spirit was to be especially poured on the Messiah (Is. xlii. 1); tempted by the devil to test him, because God tested his greatest servants, and would surely test the Messiah; fasting forty days in the wilderness, because the types of the Messiah—Moses and Elijah—thus fasted in the desert; healing all manner of disease, because Messiah was to heal (Is. xxxv. 5, 6); preaching, because Messiah was to preach (Is. lxi. 1, 2); crucified, because the hands and feet of Messiah were to be pierced (Ps. xxii. 16);

mocked, because Messiah was to be mocked (Ibid 6—8); his garments divided, because thus it was spoken of Messiah (Ibid, 18); silent before his judges, because Messiah was not to open his mouth (Is. liii. 7); buried by the rich, because Messiah was thus to find his grave (Ib. 9); rising again, because Messiah's could not be left in hell (Ps. xvi. 10); sitting at God's right hand, because there Messiah was to sit as king (Ps. cx. 1). Thus the form of the Messiah was cast, and all that had to be done was to pour in the human metal; those who alleged that the Messiah had come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, adapted his story to the story of the Messiah, pouring the history of Jesus into the mould already made for the Messiah, and thus the mythus was transformed into a history.

This theory is much strengthened by a study of the prophecies quoted in the New Testament, since we find that they are very badly "set;" take as a specimen those referred to in Matthew i. and ii. "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child," etc (i. 22, 23). If we refer to Is. vii., from whence the prophecy is taken, we shall see the wresting of the passage which is necessary to make it into a "Messianic prophecy." Ahaz, king of Judah, is hard pressed by the kings of Samaria and Syria, and he is promised deliverance by the Lord, before the virgin's son, Immanuel, should be of an age to discern between good and evil. How Ahaz could be given as a sign of a birth which was not to take place until more than 700 years afterwards, it is hard to say, nor can we believe that Ahaz was not delivered from his enemies until Jesus was old enough to know right from wrong. According to the Gospels, the name "Immanuel" was never given to Jesus, and in the prophecy is bestowed on the child simply as a promise that, "God" being "with us," Judah should be delivered from its foes. The same child is clearly spoken of as the child of Isaiah and his wife in Is. viii. 3, 4; and in verses 6—8 we find that the two kings of Samaria and Syria are to be conquered by the king of Assyria, who shall fill "thy land, O Immanuel!" thus referring distinctly to the promised child as living in that time. The Hebrew word translated "virgin" does not, as we have already shown, mean "a pure virgin," as translated in the Septuagint. It is used for a young woman, a marriageable woman, or even to describe a

woman who is being embraced by a man. Micah's supposed prophecy in Matt. ii. 5, 6, is as inapplicable to Christ as that of Isaiah. Turning back to Micah, we find that he "that is to be ruler in Israel" shall be born in Bethlehem, but Jesus was never ruler in Israel, and the description cannot therefore be applied to him; besides, finishing the passage in Micah (v. 5) we read that this same ruler "shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land," so that the prophecy has a local and immediate fulfilment in the circumstances of the time. Matthew ii. 15 is only made into a prophecy by taking the second half of a historical reference in Hosea to the Exodus of Israel from Egypt; it would be as reasonable to prove in this fashion that the Bible teaches a denial of God, "as is spoken by David the prophet, There is no God." The fulfilment of the saying of Jeremy the prophet is as true as all the preceding (verses 17, 18); Jeremy bids Rahel not to weep for the children who are carried into bondage, "for they shall come again from the land of the enemy.....thy children shall come again to their own border" (Jer. xxxi. 16, 17). Very applicable to the slaughtered babes, and so honest of "Matthew" to quote just so much of the "prophecy" as served his purpose, leaving out that which altered its whole meaning. After these specimens, we are not surprised to find that—unable to find a prophecy fit to twist to suit his object—our evangelist quietly invents one, and (verse 23) uses a prophecy which has no existence in what was "spoken by the prophets." It is needless to go through all the other passages known as Messianic prophecies, for they may all be dealt with as above; the guiding rule is to refer to the Old Testament in each case, and not to trust to the quotation as given in the New, and then to read the whole context of the "prophecy," instead of resting content with the few words which, violently wrested from their natural meaning, are forced into a superficial resemblance with the story recorded in the Gospels.

The second theory, which regards Jesus as a new hero of the ancient sun-worship, is full of intensest interest. Dupuis, in his great work on sun-worship ("Origines de Tous les Cultes") has drawn out in detail the various sun-myths, and has pointed to their common features. Briefly stated, these points are as follows: the hero is born about Dec. 25th, without sexual intercourse, for the sun, entering the winter solstice, emerges in the sign of Virgo, the heavenly virgin.

His mother remains ever-virgin, since the rays of the sun, passing through the zodiacal sign, leave it intact. His infancy is begirt with dangers, because the new-born sun is feeble in the midst of the winter's fogs and mists, which threaten to devour him ; his life is one of toil and peril, culminating at the spring equinox in a final struggle with the powers of darkness. At that period the day and the night are equal, and both fight for the mastery ; though the night veil the sun, and he seems dead ; though he has descended out of sight, below the earth, yet he rises again triumphant, and he rises in the sign of the Lamb, and is thus the Lamb of God, carrying away the darkness and death of the winter months. Henceforth, he triumphs, growing ever stronger and more brilliant. He ascends into the zenith, and there he glows, "on the right hand of God," himself God, the very substance of the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the "express image of his person," "upholding all things" by his heat and his life-giving power ; thence he pours down life and warmth on his worshippers, giving them his very self to be their life ; his substance passes into the grape and the corn, the sustainers of health ; around him are his twelve followers, the twelve signs of the zodiac, the twelve months of the year ; his day, the Lord's Day, is Sunday, the day of the Sun, and his yearly course, ever renewed, is marked each year, by the renewed memorials of his career. The signs appear in the long array of sun-heroes, making the succession of deities, old in reality, although new-named.

It may be worth noting that Jesus is said to be born at Bethlehem, a word that Dr. Inman translates as the house "of the hot one" ("Ancient Faiths," vol. i., p. 358 ; ed. 1868) ; Bethlehem is generally translated "house of bread," and the doubt arises from the Hebrew letters being originally unpointed, and the points—equivalent to vowel sounds—being inserted in later times ; this naturally gives rise to great latitude of interpretation, the vowels being inserted whenever the writer or translator thinks they ought to come in, or where the traditionary reading requires them (see Part I., pp. 13, and 31, 32).

Each point in the story of Jesus may be paralleled in earlier tales ; the birth of Krishna was prophesied of ; he was born of Devaki, although she was shut up in a tower, and no man was permitted to approach her. His birth was hymned by the Devas—the Hindoo equivalent for angels—

and a bright light shone round where he was. He was pursued by the wrath of the tyrant king, Kansa, who feared that Krishna would supplant him in the kingdom. The infants of the district were massacred, but Krishna miraculously escaped. He was brought up among the poor until he reached maturity. He preached a pure morality, and went about doing good. He healed the leper, the sick, the injured, and he raised the dead. His head was anointed by a woman; he washed the feet of the Brahmins; he was persecuted, and finally slain, being crucified. He went down into hell, rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven (see "Asiatic Researches," vol. i.; on "The Gods of Greece, Italy, and India," by Sir William Jones, an essay which, though very imperfect, has much in it that is highly instructive). He is pictorially represented as standing on the serpent, the type of evil; his foot crushes its head, while the fang of the serpent pierces his heel; also, with a halo round his head, this halo being always the symbol of the Sun-god; also, with his hands and feet pierced—the sacred stigmata—and with a hole in his side. In fact, some of the representations of him could not be distinguished from the representations of the crucified Jesus.

The name of "Krishna" is by Sir William Jones, and by many others written "Crishna," and I have seen it spelt "Cristna." The resemblance it bears, when thus written, to "Christ" is apparent only, there is no etymological similarity. Krishna is derived from the Sanscrit "Krish," to scrape, to draw, to colour. Krishna means black, or violet-coloured; Christ comes from the Greek *χριστος*, the anointed. Colonel Vallancy, Sir W. Jones tells us, informed him that "Crishna" in Irish means the Sun ("As. Res.," p. 262; ed. 1801); and there is no doubt that the Hindu Krishna is a Sun-god; the "violet-coloured" might well be a reference to the deep blue of the summer sky.

If Moses be a type of Christ, must not Bacchus be admitted to the same honour? In the ancient Orphic verses it was said that he was born in Arabia; picked up in a box that floated on the water; was known by the name of Mises, as "drawn from the water;" had a rod which he could change into a serpent, and by means of which he performed miracles; leading his army, he passed the Red Sea dryshod; he divided the rivers Orontes and Hydaspes with his rod; he drew water from a rock; where he passed

the land flowed with wine, milk, and honey (see "Diegesis," pp. 178, 179).

The name Christ Jesus is simply the anointed Saviour, or else Chrestos Jesus, the good Saviour; a title not peculiar to Jesus of Nazareth. We find Hesus, Jesous, Yes or Ies. This last name, *Ιης*, was one of the titles of Bacchus, and the simple termination "us" makes it "Jesus;" from this comes the sacred monogram I.H.S., really the Greek *ΥΗΣ*—IES; the Greek letter H, which is the capital E, has by ignorance been mistaken for the Latin H, and the ancient name of Bacchus has been thus transformed into the Latin monogram of Jesus. In both cases the letters are surrounded with a halo, the sun-rays, symbolical of the sun-deity to whom they refer. This halo surrounds the heads of gods who typify the sun, and is continually met with in Indian sculptures and paintings.

Hercules, with his twelve labours, is another source of Christian fable. "It is well known that by Hercules, in the physical mythology of the heathens, was meant the *Sun*, or *solar light*, and his twelve famous labours have been referred to the sun's passing through the twelve zodiacal signs; and this, perhaps, not without some foundation. But the labours of Hercules seem to have had a still higher view, and to have been originally designed as emblematic memorials of what the real *Son of God* and *Saviour of the world* was to do and suffer for our sakes—*Νοσων Θελεκτηρια παντα κομιξων*—, 'Bringing a cure for all our ills,' as the Orphic hymn speaks of Hercules" (Parkhurst's "Hebrew Lexicon," page 520; ed. 1813). As the story of Hercules came first in time, it must be either a prophecy of Christ, an inadmissible supposition, or else of the sources whence the story of Christ has been drawn.

Æsculapius, the heathen "Good Physician," and "the good Saviour," healed the sick and raised the dead. He was the son of God and of Coronis, and was guarded by a goatherd.

Prometheus is another forerunner of Christ, stretched in cruciform position on the rocks, tormented by Jove, the Father, because he brought help to man, and winning for man, by his agony, light and knowledge.

Osiris, the great Egyptian God, has much in common with the Christian Jesus. He was both god and man, and once lived on earth. He was slain by the evil Typhon, but rose again from the dead. After his resurrection he be-

came the Judge of all men. Once a year the Egyptians used to celebrate his death, mourning his slaying by the evil one: "this grief for the death of Osiris did not escape some ridicule; for Xenophanes, the Ionian, wittily remarked to the priests of Memphis, that if they thought Osiris a man they should not worship him, and if they thought him a God they need not talk of his death and suffering.... Of all the gods Osiris alone had a place of birth and a place of burial. His birthplace was Mount Sinai, called by the Egyptians Mount Nyssa. Hence was derived the god's Greek name Dionysus, which is the same as the Hebrew Jehovah-Nissi" ("Egyptian Mythology and Egyptian Christianity," by Samuel Sharpe, pp. 10, 11; ed. 1863). Various places claimed the honour of his burial. "Serapis" was a god's name, formed out of "Osiris" and "Apis," the sacred bull, and we find (see ante, p. 206) that the Emperor Adrian wrote that the "worshippers of Serapis are Christians," and that bishops of Serapis were bishops of Christ; although the stories differ in detail, as is natural, since the Christian tale is modified by other myths—Osiris, for instance, is married—the general outline is the same. We shall see, in Section II., how thoroughly Pagan is the origin of Christianity.

We find the Early Fathers ready enough to claim these analogies, in order to recommend their religion. Justin Martyr argues: "When we say that the word, who is the first birth of God, was produced without sexual union, and that he, Jesus Christ, our teacher, was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, we propound nothing different from what you believe regarding those whom you esteem sons of Jupiter. For you know how many sons your esteemed writers ascribe to Jupiter; Mercury, the interpreting word and teacher of all; Æsculapius, who, though he was a great physician, was struck by a thunderbolt, and so ascended to heaven; and Bacchus too, after he had been torn limb from limb; and Hercules, when he had committed himself to the flames to escape his toils; and the sons of Leda, the Dioscuri; and Perseus, son of Danae; and Bellerophon, who, though sprung from mortals, rose to heaven on the horse Pegasus" ("First Apology," ch. xxi.). "If we assert that the Word of God was born of God in a peculiar manner, different from ordinary generation, let this, as said above, be no extraordinary thing to you, who say that Mercury is the angelic word of God. But if anyone

objects that he was crucified, in this also he is on a par with those reputed sons of Jupiter of yours, who suffered as we have now enumerated.....And if we even affirm that he was born of a virgin, accept this in common with what you accept of Perseus. And in that we say that he made whole the lame, the paralytic, and those born blind, we seem to say what is very similar to the deeds said to have been done by Æsculapius" (Ibid, ch. xxi.). "Plato, in like manner, used to say that Rhadamanthus and Minos would punish the wicked who came before them; and we say that the same thing will be done, but at the hand of Christ" (Ibid, ch. viii.) In ch. liv. Justin argues that the devils invented all these gods in order that when Christ came his story should be thought to be another marvellous tale like its predecessors! On the whole, we can scarcely wonder that Cæcilius (about A.D. 211) taunted the early Christians with those facts: "All these figments of cracked-brained opiatry and silly solaces played off in the sweetness of song by deceitful poets, by you, too credulous creatures, have been shamefully reformed, and made over to your own God" (as quoted in R. Taylor's "Diegesis," p. 241). That the doctrines of Christianity had the same origin as the story of Christ, and the miracles ascribed to him, we shall prove under section ii., while section iii. will prove the same as to his morality. Judge Strange fairly says: "The Jewish Scriptures and the traditionary teaching of their doctors, the Essenes and Therapeuts, the Greek philosophers, the neoplatonism of Alexandria, and the Buddhism of the East, gave ample supplies for the composition of the doctrinal portion of the new faith; the divinely procreated personages of the Grecian and Roman pantheons, the tales of the Egyptian Osiris, and of the Indian Rama, Krishna, and Buddha, furnished the materials for the image of the new saviour of mankind; and every surrounding mythology poured forth samples of the 'mighty works' that were to be attributed to him to attract and enslave his followers: and thus, first from Judaism, and finally from the bosom of heathendom, we have our matured expression of Christianity" ("The Portraiture and Mission of Jesus," p. 27). From the mass of facts brought together above, we contend that the Gospels are in themselves utterly unworthy of credit, from (1) the miracles with which they abound, (2) the numerous contradictions of each by the others, (3) the fact that the story of the hero, the doctrines, the miracles, were current long be-

fore the supposed dates of the Gospels; so that these Gospels are simply a patchwork composed of older materials.

We have thus examined, step by step, the alleged evidences of Christianity, both external and internal; we have found it impossible to rely on its external witnesses, while the internal testimony is fatal to its claims; it is, at once, unauthenticated without, and incredible within. After earnest study, and a careful balancing of proofs, we find ourselves forced to assert that THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY ARE UNRELIABLE.

APPROXIMATE DATES CLAIMED FOR THE CHIEF CHRISTIAN AND HERETICAL AUTHORITIES.

A. D.		
Between 92 and 125	Clement of Rome	Very doubtful
Between 90 and 138	Barnabas	” ”
Said to be martyred 107	Ignatius	” ”
Between 117 and 138	Quadratus	” ”
Possibly 138	Hermas	” ”
About 150—170	Papias	” ”
About 135—145	Basilides and Valentinus	
About 140—160	Marcion	
Said to be martyred 166	Polycarp	Very doubtful
Said to be martyred 166	Justin Martyr	
After 166	Hegesippus	
About 177	Epistle of Lyons and Vienne	
Between 150 and 290	Clementines	Real date quite unknown
Between 166 and 176	Dionysius of Corinth	
About 176	Athenagoras	
Between 170 and 175	Tatian	
177 to about 200	Irenæus	
About 193	Tertullian	
About 200	Celsus	Very doubtful
205	Clement of Alexandria succeeded as head of School.	
About 205	Porphyry	
205—249	Origen	

THE SO-CALLED TEN PERSECUTIONS.

A. D.		A. D.
61	under Nero	235 under Maximin
81	„ Domitian	249 „ Decius
107	„ Trajan	254 „ Valerian
166	„ Marcus Aurelius	272 „ Aurelian
193	„ Severus	303 „ Diocletian

DATES OF ROMAN EMPERORS.

AT ALLEGED BIRTH OF CHRIST.	A. D.
Augustus Cæsar	237 The Gordians
A. D.	Maximus and Galbinus
14 Tiberius	238 Maximus, Galbinus, and Gordian
33 Caligula	238 Gordian alone
41 Claudius	244 Philip
54 Nero	249 Decius
68 Galba	251 Gallus
Otho	253 Valerian
69 Vitellius	260 Gallienus
69 Vespasian	268 Claudius
79 Titus	270 Aurelian
81 Domitian	275 Tacitus
96 Nerva	276 Florianus
98 Trajan associated	276 Probus
117 Hadrian	282 Carus
138 Antoninus Pius	283 Carinus and Numerian
161 Marcus Aurelius	285 Diocletian
180 Commodus	286 Maximian associated
192 Pertinax	305 Galerius and Constantius
193 Julian	305 Severus and Maximin
Severus	306 Constantine
211 Caracalla and Geta	Licinius
217 Macrinus	Maxentius
218 Heliogabalus	324 Constantine alone
222 Alexander Severus	
235 Maximin	

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SECTION II.

ITS ORIGIN PAGAN.

THERE are two ancient and widely-spread creeds to which we must chiefly look for the origin of Christianity, namely, Sun-worship and Nature-worship. It is doubtful which of the twain is the elder, and they are closely intertwined, the central idea of each being the same ; personally, I am inclined to think that Nature-worship is the older of the two, because it is the simpler and the nearer ; the barbarian, slowly emerging into humanity, would be more likely to worship the force which was the most immediately wonderful to him, the power of generation of new life ; to recognise the sun as the great life producer seems to imply some little growth of reason and of imagination ; sun-worship seems the idealisation of nature-worship, for the same generative force is adored in both, and round the idea of this production of new life all creeds revolve. Christian symbols and Christian ceremonies speak as plainly to the student of ancient religions as the stars speak to the astronomer, and the rocks to the geologist ; Christian Churches are as full of the fossil relics of the old creeds as are the earth's strata of the bones of extinct animals. We shall expect to find, then, a family resemblance running through all Eastern creeds—of which Christianity is one—and we shall not be surprised to find similar symbols expressing similar ideas ; there are, in fact, cardinal symbols re-appearing in all these allied religions ; the virgin and child ; the trinity in unity ; the cross ; these have their roots struck deep in human nature, and are found in every Eastern creed. So also can we trace sacraments and ceremonies, and many minor dogmas. In looking back into those ancient creeds it is necessary to get rid of the modern fashion of regarding any natural object as immodest. Sir William Jones justly remarks that in Hindustan “it never seems to have entered

the heads of the legislators, or people, that anything natural could be offensively obscene ; a singularity which pervades all their writings and conversation, but is no proof of depravity in their morals" ("Asiatic Researches," vol. i., p. 255). Gross injustice is sometimes done to ancient creeds by contemplating them from a modern point of view ; in those days every power of Nature was thought divine, and most divine of all was deemed the power of creation, whether worshipped in the sun, whose beams impregnated the earth, or in the male and female organs of generation, the universal creators of life in the animal world ; thus we find in all ancient sculptures carvings of the phallus and the yoni, expressed both naturally and symbolically, the representations becoming more and more conventional and refined as civilisation advanced ; of the infant world it may be said that it was "naked, and was not ashamed ;" as it grew older, and clothed the human form, it also draped its religious symbols, but as the body remains unaltered under its garments, so the idea concealed beneath the emblems remains the same.

The union of male and female is, then, the foundation of all religions ; the heaven marries the earth, as man marries woman, and that union is the first marriage. Saturn is the sky, the male, or active energy ; Rhea is the earth, the female, or receptive ; and these are the father and the mother of all. The Persians of old called the sky Jupiter, or Jupater, "Ju the Father." The sun is the agent of the generative power of the sky, and his beams fecundate the earth, so that from her all life is produced. Thus the sun becomes worshipped as the Father of all, and the sun is the emblem which crowns the images of the Supreme God ; the vernal equinox is the resurrection of the sun, and the sign of the zodiac in which he then is becomes the symbol of his life-producing power ; thus the bull, and afterwards the ram, became his sign as Life-Giver, and the Sun-god was pictured as bull, or as ram (or lamb), or else with the horns of his emblem, and the earthly animals became sacred for his sake. Mithra, the Sun-god of Persia, is sculptured as riding on a bull ; Osiris, the Sun-god of Egypt, wears the horns of the bull, and is worshipped as Osiris-Apis, or Serapis, the Sun-god in the sign of Apis, the bull. Later, by the precession of the equinoxes, the sun at the vernal equinox has passed into the sign of the ram (called in Persia, the lamb), and we find Jupiter Ammon, Jupiter with ram's horns, and Jesus the

Lamb of God. These symbols all denote the sun victorious over darkness and death, giving life to the world. The phallus is the other great symbol of the Life-Giver, generating life in woman, as the sun in the earth. Bacchus, Adonis, Dionysius, Apollo, Hercules, Hermes, Thammuz, Jupiter, Jehovah, Jao, or Jah, Moloch, Baal, Asher, Mahadeva, Brahma, Vishnu, Mithra, Atys, Ammon, Belus, with many another, these are all the Life-Giver under different names; they are the Sun, the Creator, the Phallus. Red is their appropriate colour. When the sun or the Phallus is not drawn in its natural form, it is indicated by a symbol: the symbol must be upright, hard, or else burning, either conical, or clubbed at one end. Thus—the torch, flame of fire, cone, serpent, thyrsus, triangle, letter **T**, cross, crosier, sceptre, caduceus, knobbed stick, tall tree, upright stone, spire, tower, minaret, upright pole, arrow, spear, sword, club, upright stump, etc., are all symbols of the generative force of the male energy in Nature of the Supreme God.

One of the most common, and the most universally used, is THE CROSS. Carved at first simply as phallus, it was gradually refined; we meet it as three balls, one above the two; the letter **T** indicated it, which, by the slightest alteration, became the cross now known as the Latin: thus "Barnabas" says that "the cross was to express the grace by the letter **T**" (ante, p. 233). We find the cross in India, Egypt, Thibet, Japan, always as the sign of life-giving power; it was worn as an amulet by girls and women, and seems to have been specially worn by the women attached to the temples, as a symbol of what was, to them, a religious calling. The cross is, in fact, nothing but the refined phallus, and in the Christian religion is a significant emblem of its Pagan origin; it was adored, carved in temples, and worn as a sacred emblem by sun and nature worshippers, long before there were any Christians to adore, carve, and wear it. The crowd kneeling before the cross in Roman Catholic and in High Anglican Churches, is a simple reproduction of the crowd who knelt before it in the temples of ancient days, and the girls who wear it amongst ourselves, are—in the most innocent unconsciousness of its real signification—exactly copying the Indian and Egyptian women of an elder time. Saturn's symbol was a cross and a ram's horn. Jupiter bore a cross with a horn. Venus a circle with a cross. The

Egyptian deities a cross and oval. (The signification of these will be dealt with below.) The Druids sought oak trees with two main arms growing in shape of a cross, and, if they failed to find such, nailed a beam cross-wise. The chief pagodas in India are built, like many Christian churches, in the form of a cross. I have read in a book on church architecture that churches should be built either in the form of a cross, or else in that of a ship, typifying the ark; *i.e.*, they should either be built in the form of the phallus or the yoni, the ship or ark being one of the symbols of the female energy (see below, p. 361).

The CRUCIFIX, or cross with human figure stretched upon it, is also found in ancient times, although not so frequently as the simple cross. The crucifix appears to have arisen from the circle of the horizon being divided into four parts, North, South, East, and West, and the Sun-god, drawn within, or on, the circle, came into contact with each cardinal point, his feet and head touching, or intersecting, two, while his outstretched arms point to the other quarters. Plato says that the "next power to the Supreme God was decussated, or figured in the shape of a cross, on the universe." Krishna is painted and sculptured on a cross. The Egyptians thus drew Osiris, and sometimes we find a circle drawn with the dividing lines, and in the midst is stretched the dead body of Osiris. Robert Taylor gives another origin for the crucifix: "The ignorant gratitude of a superstitious people, while they adored the river [Nile] on whose inundations the fertility of their provinces depended, could not fail of attaching notions of sanctity and holiness to the posts that were erected along its course, and which, by a *transverse beam*, indicated the height to which, at the spot where the beam was fixed, the waters might be expected to rise. This cross at once warned the traveller to secure his safety, and formed a standard of the value of land. Other rivers may add to the fertility of the country through which they pass, but the Nile is the absolute cause of that great fertility of the Lower Egypt, which would be all a desert, as bad as the most sandy parts of Africa without this river. It supplies it both with soil and moisture, and was therefore gratefully addressed, not merely as an ordinary river-god, but by its express title of the Egyptian Jupiter. The crosses, therefore, along the banks of the river would naturally share in the honour of the stream, and be the most expressive emblem of good fortune,

peace, and plenty. The two ideas could never be separated : the fertilising flood was the *waters of life*, that conveyed every blessing, and even existence itself, to the provinces through which they flowed. One other and most obvious hieroglyph completed the expressive allegory. The *Demon of Famine*, who, should the waters fail of their inundation, or not reach the elevation indicated by the position of the transverse beam upon the upright, would reign in all his horrors over their desolated lands. This symbolical personification was, therefore, represented as a miserable emaciated wretch, who had grown up 'as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground, who had no form nor comeliness ; and when they should see him, there was no beauty that they should desire him.' Meagre were his looks ; sharp misery had worn him to the bone. His crown of thorns indicated the sterility of the territories over which he reigned. The reed in his hand, gathered from the banks of the Nile, indicated that it was only the mighty river, by keeping within its banks, and thus withholding its wonted munificence, that placed an unreal sceptre in his gripe. He was nailed to the cross, in indication of his entire defeat. And the superscription of his infamous title, 'THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS,' expressively indicated that *Famine, Want, or Poverty*, ruled the destinies of the most slavish, beggarly, and mean race of men with whom they had the honour of being acquainted " ("Diegesis," p. 187). While it may very likely be true that the miserable aspect given to Jesus crucified is copied from some such original as Mr. Taylor here sketches, we are tolerably certain that the general idea of the crucifix had the solar origin described above.

Very closely joined to the notion of the cross is the idea of the TRINITY IN UNITY, and we need not delay upon it long. It is as universal in Eastern religions as the cross, and comes from the same idea ; all life springs from a trinity in unity in man, and, therefore, God is three in one. This trinity is, of course, symbolised by the cross, and especially by the lotus, and any "three in one" leaf ; from this has come to Christianity the conventional triple foliage so constantly seen in Church carvings, the *fleur-de-lis*, the triangle, etc., which are now—as of old—accepted as the emblems of the trinity. The persons of the trinity are found each with his own name ; in India, Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, and it is Vishnu who becomes incarnate ; in Egypt different cities

had different trinities, and "we have a hieroglyphical inscription in the British Museum as early as the reign of Sevechus of the eighth century before the Christian era, showing that the doctrine of Trinity in Unity already formed part of their religion, and that in each of the two groups last mentioned the three gods only made one person" ("Egyptian Mythology and Egyptian Christology," by S. Sharpe, p. 14). Mr. Sharpe might have gone to much earlier times and "already" have found the adoration of the trinity in unity; as far back as the first who bowed in worship before the generative force of the male three in one. Osiris, Horus, and Ra form one of the Egyptian trinities; Horus the Son, is also one of a trinity in unity made into an amulet, and called the Great God, the Son God, and the Spirit God. Horus is the slayer of Typhon, the evil one, and is sometimes represented as standing on its head, and as piercing its head with a spear, reminding us of Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu, the second person of the Indian Trinity.

These trinities, however, were not complete in themselves, for the female element is needed for the production of life; hence, we find that in most nations a fourth person is joined to the trinity, as Isis, the mother of Horus, in Egypt, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, in Christendom; the Egyptian trinity is often represented as Osiris, Horus, and Isis, but we more generally find the female constituting the fourth element, in addition to the triune, and symbolised by an oval, or circle, typical of the female organ of reproduction; thus the *crux ansata* of the Egyptians, the "symbol of life" held in the hand by the Egyptian deities, is a cross or oval, *i.e.*, the **T** with an oval at the top; the circle with the cross inside, symbolises, again, the male and female union; also the six-rayed star, the pentacle, the double triangle, the triangle and circle, the pit with a post in it, the key, the staff with a half-moon, the complicated cross. The same union is imaged out in all androgynous deities, in Elohim, Baalim, Baalath, Arba-il, the bearded Venus, the feminine Jove, the virgin and child. In countries where the Yoni worship was more popular than that of the Phallus, the VIRGIN and CHILD was a favourite deity, and to this we now turn.

Here, as in the history of the cross, we find sun and nature worship intertwined. The female element is sometimes the Earth, and sometimes the individual. The goddesses are as various in names as the gods. Is, Isis, Ishtar, Astarte,

Mylitta, Sara, Mrira, Maia, Parvati, Mary, Miriam, Eve, Juno, Venus, Diana, Artemis, Aphrodite, Hera, Rhea, Cybele, Ceres, and others, are the earth under many names; the receptive female, the producer of life, the Yoni. Black is the special colour of female deities, and the black Isis and Horus, the black Mary and Jesus are of peculiar sanctity. Their emblems are: the earth, moon, star of the sea, circle, oval, triangle, pomegranate, door, ark, fish, ship, horseshoe, chasm, cave, hole, celestial virgin, etc. They bore first the titles now worn by Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus, and were revered as the "queen of heaven." Ishtar, of Babylonia, was the "Mother of the Gods," and the "Queen of the Stars." Isis, of Egypt, was "our Immaculate Lady." She was figured with a crown of stars, and with the crescent moon. Venus was an ark brooded over by a dove, or the moon floating on the water. They are "the mother," "mamma," "emma," "ummah," or "the woman." The symbols are everywhere the same, though given with different names. Everywhere it is Mary, the mother; the female principle in nature, adored side by side with the male. She shares in the work of creation and salvation, and has a kind of equality with the Father of all; hence we hear of the immaculate conception. She produces a child alone in some stories, without even divine co-operation. The Virgo of the Zodiac is represented in ancient sculptures and drawings as a woman suckling a child, and the Paamylian feasts were celebrated at the spring equinox, and were the equivalent of the Christian feast of the Annunciation, when the power of the highest overshadowed Mary of Nazareth. Thus in India, we have Devaki and Krishna; in Egypt, Osiris and Horus—the "Saviour of the World;" in Christendom, Mary and Christ; the pictures and carvings of India and Egypt would be indistinguishable from those of Europe, were it not for the differences of dress. Apis, the sacred Egyptian bull, was always born without an earthly father, and his mother never had a second calf. So the later Sun-god, Jesus, is born without sexual intercourse, and Mary never bears another child. Jupiter visits Leda as a swan; God visits Mary as an overshadowing dove. The salutation of Gabriel to Mary is curiously like that of Mercury to Electra: "Hail, most happy of all women, you whom Jupiter has honoured with his couch; your blood will give laws to the world. I am the messenger of the gods." The mother of Fohi,

the great Chinese God, became *enseinte* by walking in the footsteps of a giant. The mother of Hercules did not lose her virginity. The savages of St. Domingo represented the chief divinity by a female figure called the "mother of God." On Friday, the day of Freya, or Venus, many Christians still eat only fish, fish being sacred to the female deity.

In Comtism we find the latest development of woman-worship, wherein the "emotional sex" becomes the sacred sex, to be guarded, cherished, sustained, adored; and thus in the youngest religion the stamp of the eldest is found.

Thus womanhood has been worshipped in all ages of the world, and maternity has been deified by all creeds: from the savage who bowed before the female symbol of motherhood, to the philosophic Comtist who adores woman "in the past, the present, and the future," as mother, wife, and daughter, the worship of the female element in nature has run side by side with that of the male; the worship is one and the same in all religions, and runs in an unbroken thread from the barbarous ages to the present time.

The doctrines of the mediation, and the divinity of Christ, and of the immortality of the soul, are as pre-Christian as the symbols which we have examined.

The idea of *the Mediator* comes to us from Persia, and the title was borne by Mithra before it was ascribed to Christ. Zoroaster taught that there was existence itself, the unknown, the eternal, "Zeruane Akerne," "time without bounds." From this issued Ormuzd, the good, the light, the creator of all. Opposite to Ormuzd is Ahriman, the bad, the dark, the deformer of all. Between these two great deities comes Mithra, the Mediator, who is the Reconciler of all things to God, who is one with Ormuzd, although distinct from him. Mithra, as we have seen, is the Sun in the sign of the Bull, exactly parallel to Jesus, the Sun in the sign of the Lamb, both the one and the other being symbolised by that sign of the zodiac in which the sun was at the spring equinox of his supposed date. "Mithras is spiritual light contending with spiritual darkness, and through his labours the kingdom of darkness shall be lit with heaven's own light; the Eternal will receive all things back into his favour, the world will be redeemed to God. The impure are to be purified, and the evil made good, through the mediation of Mithras, the reconciler of Ormuzd and Ahriman. Mithras is the Good, his name is Love. In

relation to the Eternal he is the source of grace, in relation to man he is the life-giver and mediator. He brings the 'Word,' as Brahma brings the Vedas, from the mouth of the Eternal. (See Plutarch 'De Isid. et Osirid. ;' also Dr. Hyde's 'De Religione Vet. Pers.,' ch. 22 ; see also 'Essay on Pantheism,' by Rev. J. Hunt.) It was just prior to the return of the Jews from living among the people who were dominated by these ideas, that the splendid chapter of Isaiah (xl.), or indeed the series of chapters which form the closing portion of the book, were written: 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.' And then follows a magnificent description of the greatness and supremacy of God, and this is followed by chapters which tell of a Messiah, or conquering prince, who will redeem the nation from its enemies, and restore them to the light of the divine favour, and which predict a millennium, a golden age of purified and glorified humanity. It is thus manifest that the inspiration of these writings came to the Jewish people from their contact with the religious thought of the Persians, and not from any supernatural source. From this time the Jews began to hold worthier ideas concerning God, and to cherish expectations of a golden age, a kingdom of heaven, which the Messiah, who was to be the sent messenger of God, should inaugurate. And this kingdom was to be a kingdom of righteousness, a day of marvellous light, a rule under which all evil and darkness were to perish" ("Plato, Philo, and Paul," Rev. J. W. Lake, pp. 15, 16).

The growth of the philosophical side of the dogma of the *Divinity of Christ* is as clearly traceable in Pagan and Jewish thought as is the dogma of the incarnation of the Saviour-God in the myths of Krishna, Osiris, etc. Two great teachers of the doctrine of the "Logos," the "Word," of God, stand out in pre-Christian times—the Greek Plato and the Jewish Philo. We borrow the following extract from pp. 19, 20, of the pamphlet by Mr. Lake above referred to, as showing the general theological position of Plato ; its resemblance to Christian teaching will be at once apparent (it must not be forgotten that Plato lived B.C. 400) :—

"The speculative thought and the religious teaching of

Plato are diffused throughout his voluminous writings ; but the following is a popular summary of them, by Madame Dacier, contained in her introduction to what have been classed as the ' Divine Dialogues :'—

' That there is but one God, and that we ought to love and serve him, and to endeavour to resemble him in holiness and righteousness ; that this God rewards humility and punishes pride.

' That the true happiness of man consists in being united to God, and his only misery in being separated from him.

' That the soul is mere darkness, unless it be illuminated by God ; that men are incapable even of praying well, unless God teaches them that prayer which alone can be useful to them.

' That there is nothing solid and substantial but piety ; that this is the source of all virtues, and that it is the gift of God.

' That it is better to die than to sin.

' That it is better to suffer wrong than to do it.

' That the " Word " (*Λόγος*) formed the world, and rendered it visible ; that the knowledge of the Word makes us live very happily here below, and that thereby we obtain felicity after death.

' That the soul is immortal, that the dead shall rise again, that there shall be a final judgment—both of the righteous and of the wicked, when men shall appear only with their virtues or vices, which shall be the occasion of their eternal happiness or misery.' "

It is this Logos who was " figured in the shape of a cross on the universe " (ante, p. 358). The universe, which is but the materialised thought of God, is made by his Logos, his Word, which is the expression of his thought. In the Christian creed it is the Logos, the Word of God, by whom all things are made (John i. 1—3). The very name, as well as the thought, is the same, whether we turn over the pages of Plato or those of John. Philo, the great Jewish Platonist, living in Alexandria at the close of the last century B.C. and in the first half of the first century after Christ, speaks of the Logos in terms that, to our ears, seem purely Christian. Philo was a man of high position among the Jews in Alexandria, being " a man eminent on all accounts, brother to Alexander the alabarch [governor of the Jews], and one not unskillful in philosophy " (Josephus' " Antiquities of the Jews," bk. xviii., ch. 8, sec. 1). This

“Alexander was a principal person among all his contemporaries, both for his family and wealth” (Ibid, bk. xx, ch. 5, sec. 2). He was the principal man in the Jewish embassy to Caius (Caligula) A.D. 39—40, and was then a grey-headed old man. Keim speaks of him as about sixty or seventy years old at that time, and puts his birth at about B.C. 20. He writes: “The Theology of Philo is in great measure founded on his peculiar combination of the Jewish, the Platonic, and the Neo-Platonic conception of God. The God of the Old Testament, the exalted God, as he is called by the modern Hegelian philosophy, stood in close relations to the Greek Philosophers’ conception of God, which believed that the Supreme Being could be accurately defined by the negative of all that was finite. In accordance with this, Philo also described God as the simple Entity; he disclaimed for him every name, every quality, even that of the Good, the Beautiful, the Blessed, the One. Since he is still better than the good, higher than the Unity, he can never be known *as*, but only *that*, he is: his perfect name is only the four mysterious letters (Jhvh)—that is, pure Being. By such means, indeed, neither a fuller theology nor God’s influence on the world was to be obtained. And yet it was the problem of philosophy, as well as of religion, to shed the light of God upon the world, and to lead it again to God. But how could this Being which was veiled from the world be brought to bear upon it? By Philo, as well as by all the philosophy of the time, the problem could only be solved illogically. Yet, by modifying his exalted nature, it might be done. If not by his being, yet by his work he influences the world; his powers, his angels, all in it that is best and mightiest, the instrument, the interpreter, the mediator and messenger of God; his pattern and his first-born, the Son of God, the Second God, even himself God, the divine Word or Logos communicate with the world; he is the ideal and actual type of the world and of humanity, the architect and upholder of the world, the manna and the rock in the wilderness” (“Jesus of Nazara,” vol. i., pp. 281, 282). “Man is fallen.....There is no man who is without sin, and even the perfect man, if he should be born, does not escape from it.....Yet there is a redemption, willed by God himself, and brought to pass by the act of a wise man. Adam’s successors still preserve the types of their relationship to the Father, although in an obscure form, each man

possesses the knowledge of good and evil and an incorruptible judgment, subject to reason; his spiritual strength is even now aided by the Divine Logos, the image, copy, and reflection of the blessed nature. Hence it follows that man can discern and see all the stains with which he has wilfully or involuntarily defiled his life, that man by means of his self-knowledge can decide to subdue his passions, to despise his pleasures and desires, to wage the battle of repentance, and to be just at any cost, and by the fundamental virtues of humanity, piety, and justice, to imitate the virtues of the Father.....In such perfection as is possible to all, even to women and to slaves, since no one is a slave by nature, the wise man is truly rich. He is noble and free who can proudly utter the saying of Sophocles, God is my ruler, not one among men! Such a one is priest, king, and prophet, he is no longer merely a son and scholar of the Logos, he is the companion and son of God.....God is the eternal guide and director of the world, himself requiring nothing, and giving all to his children. It is of his goodness that he does not punish as a judge, but that, as the giver of grace, he bears with all. With him all things are possible; he deals with all, even with that which is almost beyond redemption. From him all the world hopes for forgiveness of sins, the Logos, the high priest, and intercessor, and the patriarchs pray for it; he grants it, not for the world's sake, but of his own gracious nature, to those who can truly believe. He loves the humble, and saves those whom he knows to be worthy of healing. His grace elects the pious before they are born, giving them victory over sensuality, and steadfastness in virtue. He reveals himself to holy souls by his Spirit, and by his divine light leads those who are too weak by nature even to understand the external world, beyond the limits of human nature to that which is divine" ("Jesus of Nazara," pp. 283—287). Such are the most important passages of Keim's *résumé* of Philo's philosophy, and its resemblance to Christian doctrine is unmistakable, and adds one more proof to the fact that Christianity is Alexandrian rather than Judæan. It will be well to add to this sketch the passages carefully gathered out of Philo's works by Jacob Bryant, who endeavoured to prove, from their resemblance to passages in the New Testament, that Philo was a Christian, forgetting that Philo's works were mostly written when Jesus was a child and a youth, and that he never once mentions Jesus or Christianity. It

must not be forgotten that Philo lived in Alexandria, not in Judæa, and that between the Canaanitish and the Hellenic Jews there existed the most bitter hostility, so that—even were the story of Jesus true—it could not have reached Philo before A.D. 40, at which time he was old and gray-headed. We again quote from Mr. Lake's treatise, who prints the parallel passages, and we would draw special attention to the similarity of phraseology as well as of idea :

“ Identity of the Christ of the New Testament with the Logos of Philo.

Philo, describing the Logos, says :—	The New Testament, speaking of Jesus, says :—
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‘ The Logos is the Son of God the Father.’—De Profugis.

‘ The first begotten of God.’—De Somniis.

‘ And the most ancient of all beings.’—De Conf. Ling.

‘ The Logos is the image and likeness of God.’—De Monarch.

‘ The Logos is superior to the angels.’—De Profugis.

‘ The Logos is superior to all beings in the world.’—De Leg. Allegor.

‘ The Logos is the instrument by whom the world was made.’—De Leg. Allegor.

‘ The divine word by whom all things were ordered and disposed.’—De Mundi Opificio.

‘ This is the Son of God.’—John i. 34.

‘ And when he again bringeth his first-born into the world.’—Heb. i. 6.

‘ That he is the first-born of every creature.’—Col. i. 15.

‘ Christ, the image of the invisible God.’—Col. i. 15.

‘ The brightness of his (God's) glory, and the express image of his person.’—Heb. i. 3.

‘ Being made so much better than the angels. Let all the angels of God worship him.’—Heb. i. 4, 6.

‘ Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.’—Heb. ii. 8.

‘ All things were made by him (the Word or Logos), and without him was not anything made that was made.’—John i. 3.

‘ Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.’—1 Cor. viii. 6.

‘ By whom also he made the worlds.’—Heb. i. 2.

'The Logos is the light of the world, and the intellectual sun.'—De Somniis.

'The Logos only can see God.'—De Confus. Ling.

'He is the most ancient of God's works.'—De Confus. Ling.

'And was before all things.'—De Leg. Allegor.

'The Logos is esteemed the same as God.'—De Somniis.

'The Logos was eternal.'—De Plant. Noë.

'The Logos supports the world, is the connecting power by which all things are united.'—De Profugis.

'The Logos is nearest to God, without any separation; being, as it were, fixed upon the **only** true existing Deity,

'The Word (Logos) was the true light.'—John i. 9.

'The life and the light of men.'—John i. 4.

'I am the light of the world.'—John viii. 12.

'He that is of God, he hath seen the Father.'—John vi. 46.

'No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.'—John i. 18.

'Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.'—John xvii. 5.

'He was in the beginning with God.'—John i. 2.

'Before all worlds.'—2 Tim. i. 9.

'Christ, who is over all, God blessed for evermore.'—Rom. ix. 5.

'Who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God.'—Phil. ii. 6.

'Christ abideth for ever.'—John xii. 34.

'But to the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.'—Heb. i. 8.

'Upholding all things by the word of his power.'—Heb. i. 3.

'By him all things consist.'—Col. i. 17.

'I and my Father are one.'—John x. 30.

'That they may be one as

nothing coming between to disturb that unity.'—De Profugis.

'The Logos is free from all taint of sin, either voluntary or involuntary.'—De Profugis.

'The Logos the fountain of life.

'It is of the greatest consequence to every person to strive without remission to approach to the divine Logos, the Word of God above, who is the fountain of all wisdom; that by drinking largely of that sacred spring, instead of death, he may be rewarded with everlasting life.'—De Profugis.

'The Logos is the shepherd of God's flock.

'The deity, like a shepherd, and at the same time like a monarch, acts with the most consummate order and rectitude, and has appointed his First-born, the upright Logos, like the substitute of a mighty prince, to take care of his sacred flock.'—De Agricult.

The Logos, Philo says, is 'The great governor of the world; he is the creative and princely power, and through these the heavens and the whole world were produced.'—De Profugis.

we are.'—John xvii. 11.

'The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father.'—John i. 18.

'The blood of Christ, who offered himself without spot to God.'—Heb. ix. 14.

'Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.'—1 Pet. ii. 22.

'Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.'—John iv. 14.

'The great shepherd of the flock.....our Lord Jesus.'—Heb. xiii. 20.

'I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.'—John x. 14.

'Christ.....the shepherd and guardian of your souls.' 1 Pet. ii. 25.

'For Christ must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.'—1 Cor. xv. 25.

'Christ, above all principality, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in the world to

‘The Logos is the physician that heals all evil.’—De Leg. Allegor.

The Logos the Seal of God.

‘The Logos, by whom the world was framed, is the seal, after the impression of which everything is made, and is rendered the similitude and image of the perfect Word of God.’—De Profugis.

‘The soul of man is an impression of a seal, of which the prototype and original characteristic is the everlasting Logos.’—De Plantatione Noë.

The Logos the source of immortal life.

Philo says ‘that when the soul strives after its best and noblest life, then the Logos frees it from all corruption, and confers upon it the gift of immortality.’—De C. Q. Erud. Gratiâ.

Philo speaks of the Logos not only as the Son of God and his first begotten, but also styles him ‘his beloved Son.’—De Leg. Allegor.

come.....and God hath put all things under his feet.’—Eph. i. 21, 22.

‘The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to heal the broken-hearted.’—Luke iv. 18.

Christ the Seal of God.

‘In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy seal of promise.’—Eph. i. 13.

‘Jesus, the son of man..... him hath God the Father sealed.’—John vi. 27.

‘Christ, the brightness of his (God’s) glory, and the express image of his person.—Heb. i. 3.

Christ the source of eternal life.

‘The dead (in Christ) shall be raised incorruptible.’—1 Cor. xv. 52.

‘Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.’—Rom. viii. 21.

The New Testament calls Christ the Beloved Son:—

‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’—Matt. iii. 17; Luke ix. 35; 2 Pet. i. 17.

‘The Son of his love.’—Col. i. 13.

Philo says 'that good men are admitted to the assembly of the saints above.

'Those who relinquish human doctrines, and become the well-disposed disciples of God, will be one day translated to an incorruptible and perfect order of beings.'—*De Sacrificiis*.

Philo says 'that the just man, when he dies is translated to another state by the Logos, by whom the world was created. For God by his said Word (Logos), by which he made all things, will raise the perfect man from the dregs of this world, and exalt him near himself. He will place him near his own person.'—*De Sacrificiis*.

Philo says that the Logos is the true High Priest, who is without sin and anointed by God :—

'It is the world, in which the Logos, God's First-born, that great High Priest, resides. And I assert that this High Priest is no man, but the Holy Word of God ; who is not capable of either voluntary or involuntary sin, and hence his head is anointed with oil.'—*De Profugis*.

Philo mentions the Logos as the great High Priest and Mediator for the sins of the world. Speaking of the rebellion of Korah, he intro-

'But ye are come unto mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.'—*Heb. xii. 22, 23*.

'Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be the partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'—*Col. i. 12*.

The New Testament makes Jesus to say :—

'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him ; and I will raise him up at the last day.'—*John vi. 44*.

'No man cometh to the Father but by me.'—*John xvi. 6*.

'Where I am, there also shall my servant be.....him will my father honour.'—

The New Testament speaks of Jesus as the High Priest :

'Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.'—*Heb. iv. 14*.

'For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.'—*Heb. vii. 26*.

The New Testament says of Christ :—

'We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of

duces the Logos as saying :—

‘It was I who stood in the middle between the Lord and you.

‘The sacred Logos pressed with zeal and without remission that he might stand between the dead and the living.—*Quis Rerum Div. Hæres.*

The Logos, the Saviour God, who brings salvation as the reward of repentance and righteousness.

‘If then men have from their very souls a just contrition, and are changed, and have humbled themselves for their past errors, acknowledging and confessing their sins, such persons shall find pardon from the Saviour and merciful God, and receive a most choice and great advantage of being like the Logos of God, who was originally the great archetype after which the soul of man was formed.’—*De Execrationibus.*

the majesty in the heavens, a mediator of a better covenant.’—*Heb. viii. 1—6.*

‘But Christ being come an High Priest.....entered at once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.—*Heb. ix. 11, 12.*

The New Testament says of John, the forerunner of Jesus, that he preached ‘the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.’—*Mark i. 4.*

Jesus says :—

‘Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.’—*John v. 40.*

‘Beloved, we be now the sons of God ; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that when he doth appear we shall be like him.’—*1 John iii. 2.*

‘As we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.’—*1 Cor. xv. 49.*

‘For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.’—*Rom. vi. 5.”*

Here, then, we get, complete, the idea of Christ as the Word of God, and we see that Christianity is as lacking in originality on these points as in everything else. We may note, also, that this Platonic idea was current among the Jews before Philo, although he gives it to us more thoroughly and fully worked out : in the apocryphal books of the Jews we find the idea of the Logos in many passages in *Wisdom*, to take but a single case.

The widely-spread existence of this notion is acknowledged by Dean Milman in his "History of Christianity." He says : " This Being was more or less distinctly impersonated, according to the more popular or more philosophic, the more material or the more abstract, notions of the age or people. This was the doctrine from the Ganges, or even the shores of the Yellow Sea to the Ilissus ; it was the fundamental principle of the Indian religion and the Indian philosophy ; it was the basis of Zoroastrianism ; it was pure Platonism ; it was the Platonic Judaism of the Alexandrian school. Many fine passages might be quoted from Philo, on the impossibility that the first self-existing Being should become cognisable to the sense of man ; and even in Palestine, no doubt, John the Baptist and our Lord himself spoke no new doctrine, but rather the common sentiment of the more enlightened, when they declared that ' no man had seen God at any time.' In conformity with this principle, the Jews, in the interpretation of the older Scriptures, instead of direct and sensible communication from the one great Deity, had interposed either one or more intermediate beings as the channels of communication. According to one accredited tradition alluded to by St. Stephen, the law was delivered by the ' disposition of angels ;' according to another, this office was delegated to a single angel, sometimes called the angel of the Law (see Gal. iii. 19) ; at others, the Metatron. But the more ordinary representative, as it were, of God, to the sense and mind of man, was the Memra, or the Divine Word ; and it is remarkable that the same appellation is found in the Indian, the Persian, the Platonic, and the Alexandrian systems. By the Targumists, the earliest Jewish commentators on the Scriptures, this term had been already applied to the Messiah ; nor is it necessary to observe the manner in which it has been sanctified by its introduction into the Christian scheme. This uniformity of conception and coincidence of language indicates the general acquiescence of the human mind in the necessity of some mediation between the pure spiritual nature of the Deity and the moral and intellectual nature of man " (as quoted by Lake). And " this uniformity of conception and coincidence of language indicates," also, that Christianity has only received and repeated the religious ideas which existed in earlier times. How can that be a revelation from God which was well known in the world long before God revealed it ? The acknowledgment of the priority of

Pagan thought is the destruction of the supernatural claims of Christianity based on the same thought ; that cannot be supernatural after Christ which was natural before him, nor that sent down from heaven which was already on earth as the product of human reason. The Rev. Mr. Lake fairly says : " We have evidence—clear, conclusive, irrefutable evidence—as to what this doctrine really is. We can trace its birth-place in the philosophic speculations of the ancient world, we can note its gradual development and growth, we can see it in its early youth passing (through Philo and others) from Grecian philosophy into the current of Jewish thought ; then, after resting awhile in the Judaism of the period of the Christian era, we see it slightly changing its character, as it passes through Gamaliel, Paul—the writers of the Fourth Gospel and of the Epistle to the Hebrews—through Justin Martyr and Tertullian, into the stream of early Christian thought, and now from a sublime philosophical speculation it becomes dwarfed and corrupted into a church dogma, and finally gets hardened as a frozen mass of absurdity, stupidity, and blasphemy, in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds " (" Philo, Plato, and Paul," pp. 71, 72).

The idea of IMMORTALITY was by no means "brought to light" by Christ, as is pretended. The early Jews had clearly no idea of life after death ; "for in death there is no remembrance of thee ; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" (Ps. vi. 5). "Like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more.....Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" (Ps. lxxxviii. 5, 10—12). "The dead praise not the Lord" (Ps. cxv. 17). "I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts ; even one thing befalleth them : as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; yea, they have all one breath ; so that man hath no pre-eminence above a beast " (Eccles. iii. 18, 19). "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave " (Ibid, ix. 10). "The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee : they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The

living, the living, he shall praise thee " (Is. xxxviii. 18, 19). In strict accordance with this belief, that death was the end of man, the pre-captivity Jews regarded wealth, strength, prosperity, and all earthly blessings, as the reward of virtue. After the captivity they change their tone; in the post-Babylonian Psalms life after death is distinctly spoken of: " My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell " (Ps. xvi. 9, 10); together with other passages. In the apocryphal Jewish Scriptures the belief in immortality appears over and over again.

To say that Jesus " brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel," even to the Jews, is to contend for a position against all evidence. If from the Jews we turn to the Pagan thinkers, immortality is proclaimed by them long before the Jews have dreamed about it. The Egyptians, in their funeral ritual, went through the judgment of the soul before Osiris: " The resurrection of the dead to a second life had been a deep-rooted religious opinion among the Egyptians from the earliest times (" Egyptian Mythology," Sharpe, p. 52), and they appear to have believed in a transmigration of souls through the lower animals, and an ultimate return to the original body; to this end they preserved the body as a mummy, so that the soul, on its return, might find its original habitation still in existence: any who believe in the resurrection of the body should clearly follow the example of the ancient Egyptians. In later times, the more instructed Egyptians believed in a spiritual resurrection only, but the mass of the people clung to the idea of a bodily resurrection (Ibid, p. 54). " It is to the later times of Egyptian history, perhaps to the five centuries immediately before the Christian era, that the religious opinions contained in the funeral papyri chiefly belong. The roll of papyrus buried with the mummy often describes the funeral, and then goes on to the return of the soul to the body, the resurrection, the various trials and difficulties which the deceased will meet and overcome in the next world, and the garden of paradise in which he awaits the day of judgment, the trial on that day, and it then shows the punishment which would have awaited him if he had been found guilty " (Ibid, p. 64). We have already seen that the immortality of the soul was taught by Plato (ante, p. 364). The Hindus taught that happiness or misery hereafter depended upon the life here. " If duty is performed, a good name will be obtained, as well as happiness, here and after

death" ("Mahabharata," xii., 6,538, in "Religious and Moral Sentiments from Indian Writers," by J. Muir, p. 22). The "Mahabharata" was written, or rather collected, in the second century before Christ. "Poor King Rantideva bestowed water with a pure mind, and thence ascended to heaven.....King Nriga gave thousands of largesses of cows to Brahmans; but because he gave away one belonging to another person, he went to hell" (Ibid, xiv. 2,787 and 2,789. Muir, pp, 31, 32). "Let us now examine into the theology of India, as reported by Megasthenes, about B.C. 300 (Cory's 'Ancient Fragments,' p. 226, *et seq.*). 'They, the Brahmans, regard the present life merely as the conception of persons presently to be born, and death as the birth into a life of reality and happiness, to those who rightly philosophise: upon this account they are studiously careful in preparing for death'" (Inman's "Ancient Faiths," vol. ii., p. 820). Zoroaster (B.C. 1,200, or possibly 2,000) taught: "The soul, being a bright fire, by the power of the Father remains immortal, and is the mistress of life" (Ibid, p. 821). "The Indians were believers in the immortality of the soul, and conscious future existence. They taught that immediately after death the souls of men, both good and bad, proceed together along an appointed path to the bridge of the gatherer, a narrow path to heaven, over which the souls of the pious alone could pass, whilst the wicked fall from it into the gulf below; that the prayers of his living friends are of much value to the dead, and greatly help him on his journey. As his soul enters the abode of bliss, it is greeted with the words, 'How happy art thou, who hast come here to us, mortality to immortality!' Then the pious soul goes joyfully onward to Ahura-Mazdao, to the immortal saints, the golden throne, and Paradise'" (Ibid, p. 834). From these notions the writer of the story of Jesus drew his idea of the "narrow way" that led to heaven, and of the "strait gate" through which many would be unable to pass. Cicero (bk. vi. "Commonwealth," quoted by Inman) says: "Be assured that, for all those who have in any way conducted to the preservation, defence, and enlargement of their native country, there is a certain place in heaven, where they shall enjoy an eternity and happiness." It is needless to further multiply quotations in order to show that our latest development of these Eastern creeds only reiterated the teaching of the earlier phases of religious thought.

“But, at least,” urge the Christians, “we owe the sublime idea of the UNITY OF GOD to revelation, and this is grander than the Polytheism of the Pagan world.” Is it not, however, true, that just as Christians urge that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are but one God, so the thinkers of old believed in one Supreme Being, while the multitudinous gods were but as the angels and saints of Christianity, his messengers, his subordinates, not his rivals? All savages are Polytheists, just as were the Hebrews, whose god “Jehovah” was but their special god, stronger than the gods of the nations around them, gods whose existence they never denied; but as thought grew, the superior minds in each nation rose over the multitude of deities to the idea of one Supreme Being working in many ways, and the loftiest flights of the “prophets” of the Jewish Scriptures may be paralleled by those of the sages of other creeds. Zoroaster taught that “God is the first, indestructible, eternal, unbegotten, indivisible, dissimilar” (“Ancient Fragments,” Cory, p. 239, quoted by Inman). In the Sabæan Litany (two extracts only of this ancient work are preserved by El Wardi, the great Arabic historian) we read: “Thou art the Eternal One, in whom all order is centred.....Thou dost embrace all things. Thou art the Infinite and Incomprehensible, who standest alone” (“Sacred Anthology,” by M. D. Conway, pp. 74, 75). “There is only one Deity, the great soul. He is called the Sun, for he is the soul of all beings. That which is One, the wise call it in divers manners. Wise poets, by words, make the beautiful-winged manifold, though he is One” (“Rig-Veda,” B.C. 1500, from “Anthology,” p. 76). “The Divine Mind alone is the whole assemblage of the gods.....He (the Brahmin) may contemplate castle, air, fire, water, the subtile ether, in his own body and organs; in his heart, the Star; in his motion, Vishnu; in his vigour, Hara; in his speech, Agni; in digestion, Mitra; in production, Brahma; but he must consider the supreme Omnipresent Reason as sovereign of them all” (“Manu,” about B.C. 1200; his code collected about B.C. 300; from “Anthology,” p. 81).—On an ancient stone at Bonddha Gaya is a Sanscrit inscription to Buddha, in which we find: “Reverence be unto thee, an incarnation of the Deity and the Eternal One. OM! [the mysterious name of God, equivalent to pure existence, or the Jewish Jhvh] the possessor of all things in vital form! Thou art Brahma, Veeshnoo, and Mahesa!.....I adore thee, who art cele-

brated by a thousand names, and under various forms" ("Asiatic Researches," Essay xi., by Mr. Wilnot; vol. i., p. 285). Plato's teaching is, "that there is but one God" (ante, p. 364), and wherever we search, we find that the more thoughtful proclaimed the unity of the Deity. This doctrine must, then, go the way of the rest, and it must be acknowledged that the boasted revelation is, once more, but the speculation of man's unassisted reason.

Turning from these cardinal doctrines to the minor dogmas and ceremonies of Christianity, we shall still discover it to be nothing but a survival of Paganism.

BAPTISM seems to have been practised as a religious rite in all solar creeds, and has naturally, therefore, found its due place in the latest solar faith. "The idea of using water as emblematic of spiritual washing, is too obvious to allow surprise at the antiquity of this rite. Dr. Hyde, in his treatise on the 'Religion of the Ancient Persians,' xxxiv. 406, tells us that it prevailed among that people. 'They do not use circumcision for their children, but only baptism or washing for the inward purification of the soul. They bring the child to the priest into the church, and place him in front of the sun and fire, which ceremony being completed, they look upon him as more sacred than before. Lord says that they bring the water for this purpose in bark of the Holm-tree; that tree is in truth the Haum of the Magi, of which we spoke before on another occasion. Sometimes also it is otherwise done by immersing him in a large vessel of water, as Tavernier tells us. After such washing, or baptism, the priest imposes on the child the name given by his parents'" (Christian Records," Rev. Dr. Giles, p. 129).

"The Baptismal fonts in our Protestant churches, and we can hardly say more especially the little cisterns at the entrance of our Catholic chapels, are not imitations, but an unbroken and never interrupted continuation of the same *aquaminaria*, or *amula*, which the learned Montfaucon, in his 'Antiquities,' shows to have been *vases of holy water, which were placed by the heathens at the entrance of their temples, to sprinkle themselves with upon entering those sacred edifices*" ("Diegesis," R. Taylor, p. 219). Among the Hindus, to bathe in the Ganges is to be regenerated, and the water is holy because it flows from Brahma's feet. Tertullian, arguing that water, as being God's earliest and most favoured creation, and brooded over by the spirit—

Vishnu also is called Narayan, "moving on the waters"—was sanctifying in its nature, says: "'Well, but the nations, who are strangers to all understanding of spiritual powers, ascribe to their idols the imbuing of waters with the self-same efficacy.' So they do, but these cheat themselves with waters which are widowed. For washing is the channel through which they are initiated into some sacred rites of some notorious Isis or Mithra; and the gods themselves likewise they honour by washings.....At the Appollinarian and Eleusinian games they are baptised; and they presume that the effect of their doing that is the regeneration, and the remission of the penalties due to their perjuries..... Which fact, being acknowledged, we recognise here also the zeal of the devil rivalling the things of God, while we find him, too, practising baptism in his subjects" ("On Baptism," chap. v.). As "the devil" did it first, it seems scarcely fair to accuse *him* of copying.

Closely allied to baptism is the idea of regeneration, being born again. In baptism the purification is wrought by the male deity, typified in the water flowing from the throne or the feet of the god. In regeneration without water the purification is wrought by the female deity. The earth is the mother of all, and "as at birth the new being emerges from the mother, so it was supposed that emergence from a terrestrial cleft was equivalent to a new birth" (Inman's "Ancient Faiths," vol. i., p. 415; ed. 1868). Hence the custom of squeezing through a hole in a rock, or passing through a perforated stone, or between and under stones set up for the purpose; a natural cleft in a rock or in the earth was considered as specially holy, and to some of these long pilgrimages are still made in Eastern lands. On emerging from the hole, the devotee is re-born, and the sins of the past are no longer counted against him.

CONFIRMATION was also a rite employed by the ancient Persians. "Afterwards, in the fifteenth year of his age, when he begins to put on the tunic, the sudra and the girdle, that he may enter upon religion, and is engaged upon the articles of belief, the priest bestows upon him confirmation, that he may from that time be admitted into the number of the faithful, and may be looked upon as a believer himself" (Dr. Hyde on "Religion of the Ancient Persians," tr. by Dr. Giles in "Christian Records," pp. 129, 130).

LORD'S SUPPER.—Bread and wine appear to have been a regular offering to the Sun-god, whose beams ripen the corn

and the grape, and who may indeed, by a figure, be said to be transubstantiated thus for the food of man. The Persians offered bread and wine to Mithra; the people of Thibet and Tartary did the same. Cakes were made for the Queen of heaven, kneaded of dough, and were offered up to her with incense and drink-libations (Jer. vii. 18, and xliv. 19). Ishtar was worshipped with cakes, or buns, made out of the finest flour, mingled with honey, and the ancient Greeks offered the same: this bread seems to have been sometimes only offered to the deity, sometimes also eaten by the worshippers; in the same way the bread and the wine are offered to God in the Eucharist, and he is prayed to accept "our alms *and oblations.*" The Easter Cakes presented by the clergyman to his parishioners—an old English custom, now rarely met with—are the cakes of Ishtar, oval in form, symbolising the yoni. We have already dealt fully with the apparent similarity between the Christian Agapæ, and the Bacchanalian mysteries (ante, pp. 222—227). The supper of Adoneus, Adonai, literally, the "supper of the Lord," formed part of these feasts, identical in name with the supper of the Christian mysteries. The Eleusinian mysteries, celebrated at Eleusis, in honour of Ceres, goddess of corn, and Bacchus, god of wine, compel us to think of bread and wine, the very substance of the gods, as it were, there adored. And Mosheim gives us the origin of many of the Christian eucharistic ceremonies. He writes: "The profound respect that was paid to the Greek and Roman mysteries, and the extraordinary sanctity that was attributed to them, was a further circumstance that induced the Christians to give their religion a mystic air, in order to put it upon an equal foot, in point of dignity, with that of the Pagans. For this purpose they gave the name of mysteries to the institutions of the gospel, and decorated particularly the holy Sacrament with that solemn title. They used in that sacred institution, as also in that of baptism, several of the terms employed in the heathen mysteries; and proceeded so far, at length, as even to adopt some of the rites and ceremonies of which these renowned mysteries consisted. This imitation began in the Eastern provinces; but after the time of Adrian, who first introduced the mysteries among the Latins, it was followed by the Christians, who dwelt in the Western parts of the Empire. A great part, therefore, of the service of the church, in this century [A.D. 100—200], had a certain air of

the heathen mysteries, and resembled them considerably in many particulars" ("Eccles. Hist.," 2nd century, p. 56).

The whole system of THE PRIESTHOOD was transplanted into Christianity from Paganism; the Egyptian priesthood, however, was in great part hereditary, and in this differs from the Christian, while resembling the Jewish. The priests of the temple of Dea (Syria) were, on the other hand, celibate, and so were some orders of the Egyptian priests. Some classes of priests closely resembled Christian monks, living in monasteries, and undergoing many austerities; they prayed twice a day, fasted often, spoke little, and lived much apart in their cells in solitary meditation; in the most insignificant matters the same similarity may be traced. "When the Roman Catholic priest shaves the top of his head, it is because the Egyptian priest had done the same before. When the English clergyman—though he preaches his sermon in a silk or woollen robe—may read the Liturgy in no dress but linen, it is because linen was the clothing of the Egyptians. Two thousand years before the Bishop of Rome pretended to hold the keys of heaven and earth, there was an Egyptian priest with the high-sounding title of Appointed keeper of the two doors of heaven, in the city of Thebes" ("Egyptian Mythology," S. Sharpe, preface, p. xi.). The white robes of modern priests are remnants of the same old faith; the more gorgeous vestments are the ancient garb of the priests officiating in the temple of female deities; the stole is the characteristic of woman's dress; the pallium is the emblem of the yoni; the alb is the chemise; the oval or circular chasuble is again the yoni; the Christian mitre is the high cap of the Egyptian priests, and its peculiar shape is simply the open mouth of the fish, the female emblem. In old sculptures a fish's head, with open mouth pointing upwards, is often worn by the priests, and is scarcely distinguishable from the present mitre. The modern crozier is the hooked staff, emblem of the phallus; the oval frame for divine things is the female symbol once more. Thus holy medals are generally oval, and the Virgin is constantly represented in an oval frame, with the child in her arms. In some old missals, in representations of the Annunciation, we see the Virgin standing, with the dove hovering in front above her, and from the dove issues a beam of light, from the end of which, as it touches her stomach, depends an oval containing the infant Jesus.

The tinkling bell—used at the Mass at the moment of consecration—is the symbol of male and female together—the clapper, the male, within the hollow shell, the female—and was used in solar services at the moment of sacrifice. The position of the fingers of the priest in blessing the congregation is the old symbolical position of the fingers of the solar priest. The Latin form, with the two fingers and thumb upraised—copied in Anglican churches—is said rightly by ecclesiastical writers to represent the trinity; but the trinity it represents is the real human trinity: the more elaborate Greek form is intended to represent the cross as well. The decoration of the cross with flowers, specially at Easter-tide, was practised in the solar temples, and there the phallus, upright on the altar, was garlanded with spring blossoms, and was adored as the “Lord and Giver of Life, proceeding from the Father,” and indeed one with him, his very self. The sacred books of the Egyptians were written by the god Thoth, just as the sacred books of the Christians were written by the god the Holy Ghost. The rosary and cross were used by Buddhists in Thibet and Tartary. The head of the religion in those countries, the Grand Llama, is elected by the priests of a certain rank, as the Pope by his Cardinals. The faithful observe fasts, offer sacrifice for the dead, practise confession, use holy water, honour relics, make processions; they have monasteries and convents, whose inmates take vows of poverty and chastity; they flagellate themselves, have priests and bishops—in fact, they carry out the whole system of Catholicism, and have done so, since centuries before Christ, so that a Roman Catholic priest, on his first mission among them, exclaimed that the Devil had invented an imitation of Christianity in order to deceive and ruin men. As with baptism, the imitation is older than the original!

“The rites and institutions, by which the Greeks, Romans, and other nations, had formerly testified their religious veneration for fictitious deities, were now adopted, with some slight alterations, by Christian bishops, and employed in the service of the true God. [This is the way a Christian writer accounts for the resemblance his candour forces him to confess; we should put it, that Christianity, growing out of Paganism, naturally preserved many of its customs.].....Hence it happened that in these times the religion of the Greeks and Romans differed very little in its

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